

19. CULTURAL RESOURCES PROTECTION

*"I conceive that the land belongs to a vast family of which many are dead, few are living, and countless numbers are still unborn."*³²

The cultural resources program at Fort Richardson is conducted in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (16 U.S.C. Section 470, as amended), the Archeological Resources Protection Act (16 U.S.C. Section 470aa-47011), the American Indian Religious Freedom Act (42 U.S.C.), the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) (25 U.S.C. Section 3001 et seq.), DOD Directive 4710.1 (*Archeological and Historic Resources Management*, 1984), and AR 420-40 (*Historic Preservation*). Management of cultural resources on Fort Richardson is a mission of the Natural Resources Branch, ERD.

The primary regulator and source of assistance for all historic, archaeological and cultural resource issues in Alaska is the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO).

It has been determined that all Army posts in Alaska currently are in compliance with NAGPRA. Fort Richardson will not be addressed in the U.S. Army Environmental Center's Army-wide NAGPRA compliance program.³³

19-1 Objective

- Implement this INRMP in a manner consistent with protection of cultural and historic resources at Fort Richardson

19-2 Cultural and Historic Resources

In 1986, the Sixth Infantry Division (Light) completed a Historic Preservation Plan (HPP) for U.S. Army lands in Alaska, including Fort Richardson (Bacon et al., 1986). This Plan included a draft *Programmatic Memorandum of Agreement—Historic Preservation on Lands Administered by the U.S. Army in the State of Alaska*. The programmatic agreement has never been signed by the SHPO. A decision was made in 1997 to update the HPP separately for each Alaskan installation. A draft revised HPP for Fort Richardson is being developed by a contractor and will be available for review in 1998.

Much of Fort Richardson has not been surveyed for cultural and historic resources. Generally, surveys have been site specific (e.g., Glenn Highway, Malemute Drop Zone, Snowhawk Lake, and Otter Lake) with the exception of Steele (1980) who conducted a low intensity archaeological survey of the entire post. The following information, with exception of Site Summit material, is from Bacon et al. (1986).

Only a relatively small portion of Fort Richardson is considered to be highly sensitive with regard to archaeological resources. These areas include the mouth of Eagle River, the shoreline of Knik Arm, upstream portions of the Ship Creek drainage, the

³²A Nigerian Chieftain

³³USAEC Memorandum, 19 Oct 1995, NAGPRA Compliance for U.S. Army Alaska.

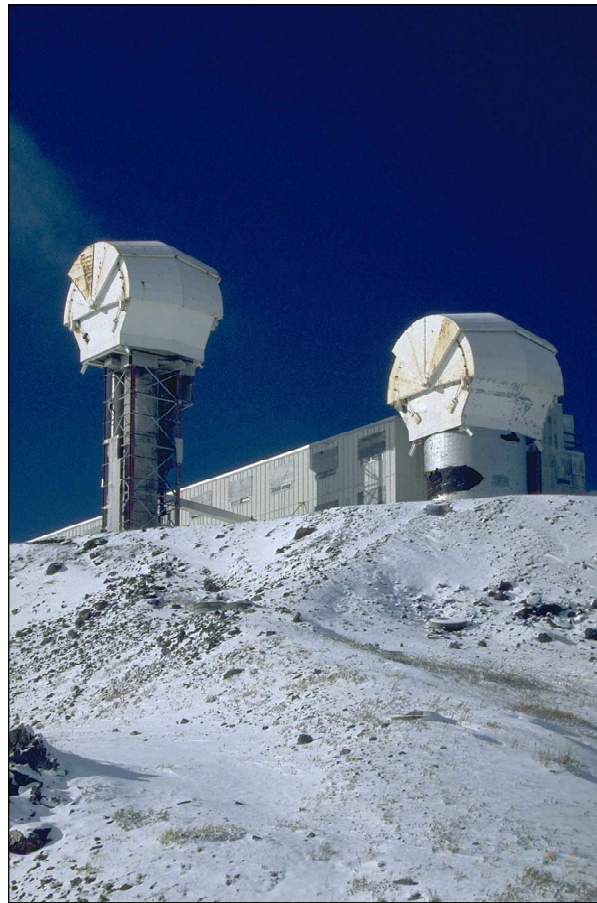
Fossil Creek drainage, Elmendorf Moraine, the 40-90 mm Range, and Grezelka Range. The rest of the post is not considered sensitive.

Historically, the Anchorage area may have been inhabited intermittently for 9,000–10,000 years, although few sites associated with this early occupation have been found. Pacific Eskimos probably occupied the area, at least seasonally, as recently as 300 years ago. The Tanaina Athabaskan Natives initially occupied the area between 1650 and 1780, and there were several Tanaina villages in the Fort Richardson area. Eklutna is the only village still in existence. Most archeological sites on Fort Richardson were probably summer fish camps. It is possible that Russian artifacts could be located on Fort Richardson due to early Russian influence in the Kenai Peninsula and the Interior. A portion of the Iditarod Trail is on Army lands, although its exact location has not been pinpointed.

The seven known cultural resources sites (not including Site Summit) on Fort Richardson are all historic and adds only a few details to the already large body of knowledge on the history of Anchorage. The value of future archeological surveys on Fort Richardson lies in discovering new sites of varying time periods and cultural affiliations. It is likely that such sites exist. Bacon et al. (1986) indicates a priority for future archeological surveys. High priorities include Otter Lake, Gwen Lake, Clunie Lake, the mouth of Eagle River, and streams emptying into Knik Arm, which have not been surveyed, as well as searching for the Iditarod Trail near Otter Lake Recreation Area.

The abandoned Nike Hercules Missile Battery on Site Summit is an important Cold War historic property. It is the only remaining Nike site of the eight built in Alaska that still maintains its historic character as a functional missile battery. It was the last Nike Battery in the nation to be deactivated, in 1979.

A Legacy Resource Management Program grant by the Department of Defense funded a study to inventory, evaluate, develop interpretative materials, and nominate the Nike Hercules Missile Battery at Site Summit to the National Register of Historic Places. This work was completed and the Nike Site



The abandoned Nike Hercules missile battery on Site Summit is an important Cold War historic property.

was listed by the Keeper of the National Park Service on July 8, 1996.

Phase II of the Legacy grant for the Nike Site provided funding to develop a feasibility study for the management of a cold war Nike Hercules Missile site. The study was completed in December 1997. Recommendations in the study will be used in developing the Fort Richardson Cultural Resources Management Plan.

Only 15 miles from downtown Anchorage, Site Summit rises about 4,000 feet above sea level, providing an incredible scenic view of Anchorage, the Susitna and Cook Inlet basins, and surrounding mountains. It has high potential for being a world class historic and recreational area, offering insights into both the Cold War and alpine tundra. Site Summit is further described in a pamphlet prepared by the Alaska Office of History and Archeology (1996).

19-3 Natural Resources Management Implications

Cultural resources management has a much shorter history than natural resources management at Fort Richardson. During the 1980s, USARAK adopted a more proactive approach to cultural resources management.

In the past, natural resources projects were overlooked as potential causes of adverse impacts to archeological sites. Activities such as tree removal and training land restoration are all potentially damaging. In order to reduce negative impacts to cultural resources, projects that involve ground-disturbing activities will be processed through the USARAK Natural Resources cultural resources manager. Furthermore, the cultural resources manager will be consulted in areas of long-range planning (such as the INRMP) that delineate policy.

Determination of effect and consultation guidelines provided in implementing regulations for the National Historic Preservation Act (36 CFR 800) will be followed during ERD review of projects. Any project assessed as having an effect on a cultural resource site or historic property at Fort Richardson will be coordinated with the Alaska SHPO.

Natural resources-related law enforcement also has potential impacts on preservation of cultural resources. If natural resources enforcement officers are added to the Natural Resources Branch staff (Section 16-6), they will also be trained in enforcement of various cultural resources laws, especially the Archeological Resources Protection Act.

Natural and cultural resources are not mutually exclusive. Personnel involved in both of these programs at Fort Richardson will work closely with one another to insure their successful integration.